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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 007729

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Bush, Blair say Saddam Should be Executed - Hurriyet
Saddam denies leading resistance in Iraq - Milliyet
Bush's popularity rising - Milliyet
Shiites celebrate Saddam's capture, Sunnis saddened -
Milliyet
Saddam's daughters demand a fair trial - Aksam
Saddam might be tried in Spring - Zaman
US violated Geneva Convention on POWs - Aksam
CIA to interrogate Saddam - Sabah
PM Erdogan: Saddam's end should be a lesson for other
dictators - Hurriyet
Ankara to disclose Cyprus plan next week - Hurriyet
PM Erdogan: Cyprus needs new politicians - Sabah
PM Erdogan: Turkish Cypriot voters demand new policies -
Zaman

OPINION MAKERS

Bush's hope for reelection strengthened - Radikal
US troops fire on rally of Saddam supporters - Cumhuriyet
West believes Turkish Cypriots want a solution - Radikal
Denktas, Ankara working on separate Cyprus plans -
Cumhuriyet
Verheugen disappointed by TRNC elections - Cumhuriyet
Swiss parliament recognizes Armenian Genocide - Radikal

BRIEFING

Cyprus: Following the formation of a new government in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), the Turkish and TRNC prime ministers are expected to disclose a new plan for a peaceful solution in Cyprus. The Turkish side wants some changes to the Annan Plan. Ankara favors four-party talks including Turkey, Greece, the TRNC and the Greek Cypriots. Prime Minister Erdogan has interpreted the election results as an indication of Turkish Cypriots' aspiration to join the EU while preserving their existing rights on the island. Turkey might approve territorial concessions, EU membership for Turkish Cypriots, and implementation of the Annan Plan in exchange for a bi-zonal structure in which sovereignty of the Turkish Cypriots and Ankara's status as a guarantor country are recognized. Meanwhile, Denktas will hold talks with leaders of the parties in the TRNC parliament beginning on Wednesday. CTP leader Talat said he might consider forming a national unity government within the framework of an EU vision for the TRNC. US Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston will be in the TRNC today to meet with Denktas. Turkish papers report EU enlargement commissioner Verheugen as saying that chances have declined for the accession of a unified Cyprus to the EU.

Iraq: Prime Minister Erdogan told his party group on Tuesday that tyrants around the world should draw lessons from the plight of Saddam Hussein. Saddam will pay for his cruelty, Erdogan said. 'Such systems are in conflict with democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. They have to change themselves in a way to benefit their own people,' Erdogan stressed. Turkey will support all kinds of democratic initiatives in Iraq following the capture of Saddam, Erdogan noted.

UNICEF schooling project: 640,000 girls in Turkey are not sent to school, and 6 million of the country's 7 million illiterate population are women, according to a survey by UNICEF. UNICEF Turkey representative Edmond McLoughney said that a schooling project for girls, carried out in coordination with the Ministry of Education, has noticeably increased the schooling rate among female students in ten provinces in east and southeast Turkey. 250,000 female students are denied education in eastern Turkey, the UNICEF report claims.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

Saddam's Capture and the Future of Iraq

"The End of Saddam -- and a New beginning?"

Sami Kohen observed in the mass appeal Milliyet (12/17):

"The dramatic finale for Saddam marks the end of his 35-year-long era. This is a victory for the Bush administration, but it does not necessarily ensure the realization of US goals for Iraq more generally. First of all, as Bush mentioned, the violence and social unrest might continue. Following the capture of Saddam, US forces in Iraq will have a better sense about the nature of the attacks coming from within the Sunni triangle. . The legal process will also have an impact on Iraq's transition. If Saddam is to be tried in Iraq, it would be best that the UN or another international organization be given a supervisory status. Otherwise the trial will be controversial and will provide an opportunity for pro-Saddam groups in Iraq to make it into a political show. There are ways to prevent more negative developments from occurring in the post-Saddam era. The US as well as the IGC have most of the responsibility at this point. Iraq is still waiting to return to normal daily life. The people of Iraq continue to suffer from daily problems. Security is still lacking. These are the immediate issues for the coalition forces to deal with. The Iraqi administrators are supposed to fill in the political-ideological gap in the post-Saddam period with a new vision and the establishment of a new Iraqi identity."

"The end for a dictator"

Kamuran Ozbir observed in the nationalist Ortadogu (12/17):

"The capture of Saddam marks the end of a 24-year dictatorship. Saddam is now expected to be charged with crimes committed against his own people. This event also sends a message to other oppressive regimes in the Arab and Islamic world. Western circles tend to believe that the capture of Saddam will pave the way for democratization in the Middle East. It was also important to see congratulatory messages to the Bush administration from France and Germany, which both stood against the Iraq war. . Following the capture of Saddam, the coalition forces should consider giving a greater role to the Sunni people as well as former Baath Party members in the formation of a new Iraq. It is important to note that British Prime Minister Blair mentioned this in his remarks as well."

EDELMAN